



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

25 November 1982

Dear Antony,

The Prime Minister has received a letter from Sir Anthony Kershaw asking whether she would agree that Sir Anthony Parsons should appear before the Foreign Affairs Committee to give evidence about his duties. I enclose a copy of Sir Anthony Kershaw's letter.

I have had a brief conversation with the Prime Minister about this, and her present view is that she would not wish Sir Anthony Parsons to appear in this way. It has not been the practice for special advisers from No 10 to appear before Select Committees and the Prime Minister would be reluctant to create a precedent for such an appearance. The best way of dealing with this might be for the Prime Minister to write explaining that she does not think it appropriate for Sir Anthony Parsons to appear before the Committee, but dealing with the purpose of the request by sending a note about Sir Anthony Parsons's role for circulation to the Committee. I attach a draft of such a letter and note, and I should be very grateful if you could let me have any comments by noon tomorrow, 26 November.

I am copying this letter, with a similar request, to Sir Robert Armstrong and to Andrew Ward (Lord President's Office).

Yours sincerely,

Robin Butler

Sir Antony Acland, KCMG, KCVO.



Sir Antony Acland KCMG KCVO  
Permanent Under-Secretary of State

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 November 1982

F E R Butler Esq  
10 DOWNING STREET

*Dear Robin,*

SIR ANTHONY PARSONS

Thank you for your letter of 25 <sup>with FERB</sup> November.

Mr Pym strongly agrees with the Prime Minister that Sir Anthony Parsons should not appear before the FAC, and would like the Prime Minister's letter to be very firm on the point. It might be better to omit the clause, 'and since Sir Anthony Parsons is not due to take up his appointment until the New Year', from the draft attached to your letter, since this may only encourage Sir Anthony Kershaw and the Committee to return to the charge then. Otherwise Mr Pym is content with your two drafts.

*Yours ever*  
*Antony*

Antony Acland

cc: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB CVO  
CABINET OFFICE  
Andrew Ward Esq  
LORD PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

MR. BUTLER

C. McFall  
Sir A. Adland

Sir Anthony Parsons

I agree that Sir Anthony Parsons should not appear before the FAC.

I am content with the draft letter and note, subject to the following suggested amendments:

Draft letter:

Line 3, delete "special".

Lines 4 to 6, delete "and some.... the New Year".

Draft note:

Line 1, delete "special".

Line 15, after "advising" insert "her".

("Special advisor" is a bit of a term of art; as it was not used in the memorandum, I think we should avoid using it in his letter and note.

RCA 26 vii